Utah State Charter School Board Meeting Minutes

May 17, 2007

North & South Board Rooms
Utah State Office of Education

APPROVED

Members present: Scott Smith, Julie Adamic, Barbara Killpack, John Pingree, Brian Allen, Eric Smith, and

Joel Wright

Staff present: Marlies Burns, Gary Belliston, Jo Schmitt

Others present: Superintendent Patti Harrington, Mark Cluff, Janene Bowen, Carolyn Sharette,

Representatives from Merit College Preparatory Academy, Rockwell Charter High School, Venture Academy,

and Providence Hall

Call to Order

Chair Scott Smith called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Member John Pingree and seconded by Member Brian Allen to approve the minutes from the April 23, 2007 State Charter School Board Meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Charter School Board Chair's Report

Chair Scott Smith informed the SCSB that the Utah State Office of Education has hired a new staff member that will begin employment in the Charter School Section on June 4, 2007 and will replace Marlies Burns's previous position as Education Specialist, overseeing grants. Chair Smith also stated the legislation has allowed funds for additional staff members for the Charter School Section and before the end of the summer, the section will be fully staffed.

Mr. Smith informed the SCSB that at last board meeting the issue was addressed of appointing new board members for replacing those members whose terms had expired. It has been resolved that Member Julie Adamic's and Member Brian Allen's terms were extended for a full term, to expire June 30, 2010. Chair Smith thanked them for accepting the invitation to remain members of the State Charter School Board. He also expressed his thanks to all members of the board for their willingness to be involved.

Board Standing Committee Reports

• Communication Committee-Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB of an informal committee that has been put together by Representative Bigelow to discuss the charter school bill that will be written for the next legislative session. She stated charter school funding is an issue, but an issue that will hopefully be resolved within the next legislative session. This committee consists of district individuals, state board individuals, charter board individuals, and charter staff. Ms. Burns also informed the SCSB the Communication Committee also talked briefly regarding some of the changes that had been proposed and approved on first and second reading by the State Board of Education regarding the Charter School Rule R277-470. Ms. Burns stated there are two main items the committee would like to be added to the Communication Committee agenda next month. First, the standard application that is required through HB164 and second, the timeframe that must be followed by all charter schools for enrolling students beginning with 2008-2009. Also, in the Communication Committee Meeting, there was discussion on ideas on how to work with the Utah High School Athletics Association to have better communication

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between the State Charter School Board and with the UHSAA. Barbara Killpack and Daren Beck, two representatives from the Communication Committee will serve as contacts with Larry Shumway, who is USOE's Associate Superintendent assigned to be on the UHSAA Board. Mark Cluff, a member of the State Board of Education, suggested acquiring knowledge of the rules and requirements to be part of UHSAA, in order to train existing and new charter schools; he further suggested if there are no requirements or rules specific to charter schools how can we help and assist in crafting those rules and requirements. Chair Smith stated that charter schools need to follow within the rules, and not pick and choose the rules wanting to follow. He also stated that if the charter schools do not fit in those rules, there is a need to discuss how to make it work. Mr. Cluff informed the SCSB that on May 24, 2007 the Legislative Rules Committee would be having a session discussing the Utah High School Athletic Association.

- Rule Review Committee-Member Brian Allen informed the SCSB that the committee went through R277-470 and looked at the existing proposed language and also the changes that were suggested by the Law and Policy Committee. Member Allen stated the committee is prepared to comment on those changes and make recommendations.
- Annual Report Committee-Barbara Killpack informed she was the only member of the committee that was in attendance, but that she had communication with all members and felt they had good reasons for not attending, but felt they may meet next month.
- Grants Committee-Member John Pingree informed the SCSB that Erik Olson, from Canyon Rim Academy was asked to be the vice chair of the committee and the only other member of the committee in attendance was Julia Barrientos, from Dual Immersion Academy. Member Pingree stated there were many items discussed by the committee that would be helpful for charter schools to succeed; 1) a grant writing workshop. Ms. Barrientos offered to teach that workshop, with her being a grant writer by profession; 2) start-up and implementation grant application process. There was concern raised that if grants are a competitive process, each school should have access to the best information on how to write grants, to be able to maximize the dollars available to them. Director Marlies Burns stated that the application process was competitive and each school was graded on a rubric that was provided to them. They had very specific criteria with which the application would be scored. Ms. Burns also stated that the State Charter School Office had held a grant writing workshop, and that anyone was welcome to attend. She informed the SCSB that couple of the schools did attend, but the majority did not. The schools were given a percentage on the quality of their application; 3) make available foundationcenter.org, a data base that is searchable for publicized sources for funding; 4) a calendar of deadlines for grants.

Budget of Charter School Board Expenses

Gary Belliston distributed to the SCSB a spreadsheet generated by the state accounting system showing the total budget for the SCBS and the Charter School Staff. Mr. Belliston also distributed a spreadsheet with travel reimbursements for each of the charter school board members and the charter school staff.

School LAND Trust Proposals

Director Marlies Burns reminded the SCSB that Natalie Gordon attended last month's Charter School Board Meeting explaining the process and why the School LAND Trust Proposals need to be approved by the SCSB. Ms. Burns stated only half of the charter schools had turned in the plan at the time, and on today's agenda is the second half of the schools. Member John Pingree questioned why the amounts were different for each school. He was informed that the amounts on the proposals were based on the student enrollment of each school. Motion was made by Member Brian Allen and seconded by Member Eric Smith to approve the School LAND Trust Proposal for the 2007-2008 school year. The motion was carried unanimously.

Recommendations for 2008-2009 Charter Schools

Chair Scott Smith informed the SCSB that in approving the new charter schools, if they considered enrollment growth allowed for first year of operation, and approve all seven schools, there would be a positive of 503

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students. If all seven schools were approved for the maximum potential of their application, there would be a negative 55 students. Chair Smith requested the SCSB to rank the applications in a 1-7 order. He stated that if there were any schools they did not feel comfortable in approving, give them a ranking of 10.

After much discussion motion was made by Member John Pingree and seconded by Member Brian Allen to recommend approval to the State Board of Education all seven charter school applications for the 2008-2009 school year. (Emerson Alcott Academy, Gateway Preparatory Academy, Merit College Preparatory Academy, Providence Hall, Quest Academy, Rockwell Charter High School, and Venture Academy).

Member Julie Adamic inquired which schools have aligned themselves with management companies. She was informed Academica West is working with Quest Academy and Excel Education Group is working with Providence Hall. Chair Scott Smith stated his understanding was that Excel Education Group was helping with funding for Providence Hall's building, and not working with the management of the school.

Member Barbara Killpack expressed her concerns with Gateway Preparatory Academy's teaching methods. Have the methods been researched thoroughly and can the school be successful? Director Marlies Burns stated the teaching methods Gateway Preparatory Academy plans to implement are proven researched methods, but not necessarily combined the way they are planning. Chair Smith stated that he has spoken with representatives from Gateway Preparatory Academy and they have ensured him that with this very unique, innovative concept, they are prepared and guarantee to watch it closely; to change, alter, and/or eliminate parts of it, if needed. He also stated Gateway Preparatory Academy informed him they would not put the children at risk.

Member Julie Adamic questioned how the State Core would be addressed in mixed grades. Ms. Burns responded that it is a legitimate concern and unless you combine grades such as a 1st-2nd grade class or a 3rd-4th grade class, where you can alter every other year which curriculum method is taught, and you simply group them by ability, there is potentially some concern that not all requirements of the Core could be met for every year for every child. Ms. Adamic stated that she has seen clarification from Gateway Preparatory Academy regarding their teaching methods and that they do recognize that the State Core for Social Studies and Science would be taught in a different sequence, but she was surprised they did not provide that sequence. Mark Cluff stated that the feelings of the State Board of Education are that the Core is important, but the USBE does not investigate and hold anyone tight to the State Core, except for the end of the CRT testing. The USBE has decided, at this point in time, to use that method to ensure schools are held to the Core. If it is seen in the first year or two of operation that Gateway Preparatory Academy's social studies and science scores become inappropriate, then address their methods of teaching at that time. Mr. Cluff stated that the whole purpose of Charter Schools is innovation and to try something new. Member Brian Allen expressed his support to Gateway Preparatory Academy's board and innovativeness.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Chair Scott Smith stated he wanted to publicly thank the Charter School Staff and the process that is being used to recommend for approval new charter schools. Chair Smith also stated even though there have been changes in this process that have been necessary, he feels this is the cleanest and best process that has been developed. Member Brian Allen also expressed his thanks for the quality of applications that are being submitted and the level of expertise that is being developed in charter schools, which reflects in the involvement of the Charter School Staff.

R277-470 Changes

Director Marlies Burns presented a summary of the changes to the rule that were made at the last State Board of Education Meeting. Member Brian Allen outlined changes, concerns and recommendations that had been discussed in the Rule Review Committee Meeting regarding the "founding member status" definition; the title of "satellite campus" vs. "satellite school" and school name, with separate financial records and AYP scores;

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same timeframe for traditional and charter schools; use of the word "admitted" instead of "welcomed;" the onetime \$5 fee an option, as opposed to being required; attending schools of choice in violation of state or federal law; to strike "originally approved" language, and add "match the charter language or current rule or law;" adequate qualified administrators and staff; School LAND Trust funds committee; the number of parents for representation at satellite schools; and eligibility to participate in federal or state grant funds.

Motion was made by Member Eric Smith and seconded by Member John Pingree to accept the changes and recommendations made by the Rule Review Committee. The motion was carried unanimously.

Executive Session

Motion was made by Member John Pingree and seconded by Member Brian Allen to move into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel, legal, land and audit issues. The SCSB was polled and by unanimous consent of those present the SCSB moved into an executive session.

Motion was made by Member Barbara Killpack and seconded by Member John Pingree to reconvene into open meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Uintah River High School Waiver Request

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB that Uintah River High School is seeking a waiver from R277-470-(9)(B), Charter School Parental Involvement. Since authorized, Uintah River High School's governing board has always consisted of six appointed members with each member appointed by a member of the Ute Indian Tribe Business Committee, also consisting of six members. The governing board also serves as the Education Board for the Ute Indian Tribe Education Department. Uintah River High School requests a wavier to require elected members of the board, as this goes against the current Ute Indian Tribe sovereign governance structure. Mark Cluff recommended denying the request because of the possibility of others requesting such waivers in the future.

Motion was made by Member Eric Smith and seconded by Member Joel Wright to deny Uintah River High School's request and advise them to seek further guidance from the Charter School Staff to know of their options. The motion was carried unanimously.

Moab Charter School Amendment Request

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB that Moab Charter School has gone through their current charter and made proposed revisions to reflect better practices of what their school is capable and willing to do.

Motion was made by Member Barbara Killpack and seconded by Member Joel Wright to approve the recommended changes to Moab Charter School's Charter. The motion was carried unanimously.

Adjourn

Motion was made to adjourn at 1:30 p.m. by Member Eric Smith.

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